TOWN
&
OUNTRY
HURCH

Purposes of This Paper

The purposes of this paper are:

A. To encourage cooperation ıong rural churches.

B. To improve the administra- ɔn of the local church, this to in- ıde organization of the church, ıance, religious education, com- ınity relationships, and the train- g of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development a Christian philosophy of rural e, this to embrace ethical issues in riculture, social reconstruction, d government programs; and the ntent of the minister's message.

ırt of Larger Program

The paper will be an important rt of an enlarged "cooperative ral church program," that will en- ırage a national "rural church ɔvement." The paper will be ked with the National Convoca- n on the Church in Town and ıuntry.

Contributors

HIRLEY E. GREENE, Merom Institute, rom, Indiana.

LAURIS B. WHITMAN, Montana Baptist ıvention.

OHN T. SEDDON, Salvation Army, Omaha.

I. PAUL DOUGLASS, Committee for Coop- tive Field.

IENRY A. FAST, Mennonite Central Com- ttee.

This Issue
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A Commitment of Advance for Rural Churches in America

By the Committee on Town and Country, 1947

• To fulfill the great commission of our Lord, we, the Town and Country Committee of the Home Missions Council, commit ourselves to the following:

I. Services to the Rural Community

A. *Providing a Comprehensive Gospel*

To present the Christian gospel in its fullness in every rural community of America, making it functional as a cohesive force in every area and interest of rural life, as: the development and integration of human personality; decision and commitment to the Christian way of life; Christian worship; Christian education; Christian fellowship and recreation; rural health; home and family life, rural art, literature, and dramatics; labor and economics.

B. *Integrating Community Activities*

To promote and integrate all community activities which contribute to human personality and welfare and also to provide for those activities essential to a more abundant life not carried on effectively by other agencies.

C. *Eliminating Discrimination*

To bring the power of the church to focus on the elimination of unchristian social and racial discrimination throughout rural America.

D. *Developing a World Concept*

To give rural people a world vision so that they will come to know the needs of millions in the world who are hungry and poorly clothed, whom the farmers of America help feed and clothe by the export of their grain and fiber. The American farmer and his neighbor in the rural town must come to know that they are indispensable citizens of "One World." People who practice mutual aid among their neighbors and who are generous in the presence of the need of the brother whom they know personally should develop the same attitudes and habits in relations to the world neighborhood and the brethren whom they cannot see.

E. *Building Security*

To develop among rural people knowledge, fellowship, and will to achieve economic, social, and spiritual security. To aid them to find a beautiful and satisfying way of life by seeing to it that they are profitably related to the economic, social, and cultural agencies of the community and that they are adequately trained in the desirability, organization, and management of institutions such as producer and consumer cooperatives and workers' organizations, which will enhance their rural way of life.

F. *Promoting Land Settlement*

To help Christian people settle upon productive land. There are many families who love the rural way of life but lack the guidance and means satisfactorily to acquire and use land. This can be achieved through land settlement enterprises in cooperation with the Farmers' Home Administration and other government agencies, or through church boards, local parishes, or local cooperatives which may have loan funds for the purchase of land, livestock, and equipment.

G. *Establishing Rural People in Trade, Business, and Professions*

To help Christian, non-farm, rural people to become successfully established in such trades, businesses, and professions as will develop their personalities and families and integrate them into the community life.

H. *Developing a Concern for Farm Labor*

To develop a concern for farm labor, including the tenant farmer and transient agricultural worker. Some of these people may acquire farm ownership and they should be encouraged; but many of them will not acquire farm ownership but should have decent living and laboring conditions, spiritual support, and be integrated into the life of the community through its institutions. The Church must lead in the establishment of both ideology and practice in this area of human life.

I. *Promoting Balanced Family and Community Life*

To promote a balanced family and community life—economic, social, religious, esthetic, educational, and political. This should provide education for community living so as to assimilate more readily the many newcomers into the rural community, helping them to be contributing rather than disintegrating forces to a better and richer community life. All rural institutions, such as the school, church, and rural government, should be integrated so that they conserve and serve the best interests of the community.

J. *Serving Marginal People*

To discover marginal people, due either to scattered population or deficient wealth, and develop ways and means of bringing the services of the church to them.

K. *Opposing Disintegrating Forces*

To educate for and organize forces in society which will strongly support time-tested values in family and community life, so there will be stability and security for all. Land control must be so arranged as to permit social freedom with security of tenure.

L. *Spiritualizing Rural Culture*

To make a spiritual impact upon rural culture including rural art, literature, dramatics, recreation, and education, enlisting the interest of artists and writers in rural subjects.

II. Services to the Rural Church

A. *Basic Services*

1. *Building a Strong Church.* To strengthen needy churches in rural areas; broadening the geographical and population bases of the parish so as to correspond to the modern sociological community, such as the town and neighboring village and open country; and also merging the small open country neighborhoods, thus making the parish community large enough to support the church's enterprises; developing effective techniques of parish administration, a satisfying program, and attractive buildings, so that the Christian message can be presented in its entirety, meeting the total needs of individual and community life, and investing therein a Christian quality of life.

2. *Promoting Church Unity.* To promote and practice local Christian unity, rapidly educating rural people to be Christian, united in action and spirit, doing the works of God in the community. The spiritual welfare of the people must outweigh vested interests of denominations, both in old communities where the church has long been established and in new communities where the church must be aggressively planted to serve new rural populations. There should be in every rural community of America one and only one strong, well equipped and staffed evangelical church, or an acceptable cooperative program of which the people are proud and which they have a will to support.

B. *Specific Services to be Rendered by Town and Country Committee*

1. *Providing Aid in Conferences and Surveys.* To provide a service to all constituent rural churches, such as rural church literature, aid in holding rural church conferences, and making rural church and community surveys. To sponsor rural church and community research in areas which will be helpful to pastors and other rural leaders.

2. *Publishing* Town and Country Church. To publish the Town and Country Church periodical enlarging and enriching its usefulness among ministers and laymen of the rural church.

3. *Holding an Annual Convocation.* To plan and hold an annual Convocation, this Convocation to be held in different areas of the United States from year to year, promoting a large regional attendance from the local area and the nation. Since the three recent National Convocations of the Town and Country church have met with such high approval and acclaim, not only from rural churchmen but other rural agencies it is believed that this activity is significant in promoting and advancing the rural church cause throughout the nation.

4. To cooperate with the International Council of Religious Education in the development of study, demonstration, field service and printed materials useful for Christian education in the rural community.

III. The Rural Minister

A. *Recruitment and Training*

To recruit and train a rural ministry adequate to the nation's need by discovering men and women who are committed to rural life as a way of living, and providing them with training for a diversified Christian ministry that is not primarily classical but, rather, professional, wherein the teaching of such subjects as Bible, homiletics, and theology are rurally professionalized. Also, through cooperation with agricultural colleges and recognized training parishes to develop a well rounded training program for the rural ministry.

B. *In-Service Training*

To cooperate with colleges of agriculture, schools of theology and other agencies to provide a nation-wide, well balanced program of in-service training for rural religious workers.

C. *Travel and Study*

To provide for leave of absence for rural church workers for travel and graduate study leading to advanced degrees in such fields as Rural Theology, Rural Sociology, and Economics.

. *Salary, Pension, Mileage, and Other Expenses*

To care for the physical needs of ıe rural ministry by providing ıem with a mileage allowance, adeıate salary and pension, and modn homes in which to live and work ıd rear their families. To this end, ɜnominations should be encouraged establish funds from which speal grants can be made to effect arity in ministers' salaries—both ıral and urban.

. *Recognition*

To recognize distinguished workıanship in the rural church, both ı the part of the ministry and of ıe local parish.

V. Rural-Urban Relations

. *Urban Orientation*

To recognize that, inasmuch as a zable proportion of rural people ill migrate to urban areas, it is an nportant part of the rural church rogram to help to orient them to ıe urban way of life and to develop ɜtter working relations between rban and rural churches.

. *Educating Urban Churches in Rural Problems*

To educate urban churches in ıral problems through the dissemiation of rural church literature to ıeir memberships, providing them ith speakers on problems of the ıral communities and the rural ıurch, urging them to observe speal rural occasions such as Rural ife Sunday and Harvest Home Fesval. This is highly significant since ıral and urban cultures are rapidly ending through trade, social interurse, and movement of populaons.

. *To Challenge the Urban Section of the Church to Support an Adequate Rural Ministry Program*

To challenge urban churches to are in the enrichment and finanal support of the rural church proam, inasmuch as the growth of ban churches depends so largely ı rural-urban migration, and since e urban churches absorb such a rge amount of rural wealth.

A New Hymn by Rural Minister

• Rev. Edward D. Hamner, a minister of the Disciples Church at Livingston, Tenn., has written the text of the hymn published below. There also appears the name of the tune preferred by Mr. Hamner. Mr. Hamner is also President of the Disciples Rural Fellowship.

HERE ON MY NATIVE SOIL

Tune:
"Consolation" by Mendelssohn
Words: Edward D. Hamner

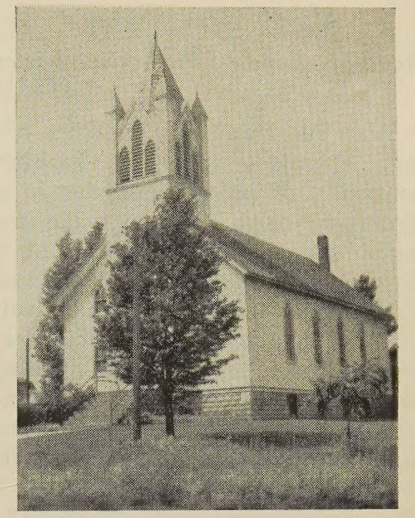
Here on my native soil I live and labor,
Here, close to God and nature's wondrous ways;
Glad in my heart for land and home and neighbor—
Glad for the useful tasks that fill my days.

This is my task: To live and help another;
This is my destiny upon the sod:
That from its yield I feed myself and brother—
That I may give it back enriched to God.

Working with Him in common ways and lowly,
In field and woods and pasture land I love,
Knowing my work though humble still is holy
I bow my head and thank my God above.

Michigan Baptists

• Recently the Baptists of Michigan stressed rural work. The third Annual Conference of Rural and Village Pastors was held at the Grand Blanc Baptist Church. The *Michigan Baptist* ran an article as part of the general emphasis, containing the title, "The Old Gray Church 'Ain't What She Used to Be' Four Short Years Ago." It appears that a Mennonite minister became pastor of a Methodist church. Joseph Kimbell, minister, at West Eckford, got his minister's degree on the subject of "Rural Churches," and went to work on a streamlining job. The *Michigan Baptist* features pictures of country churches in most issues.



Cereal for Europe

• This attractive picture is that of St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church at Nashua, Iowa. The pastor, Rev. Paul Vanderohe, is aware of what is happening in the rural field. He attended the Convocation in Des Moines and says: "This Convocation was the best ever. I won't miss next year." That the church is alive to its Christian responsibility may be indicated in the special project in which it is participating with nine other Evangelical and Reformed churches. The project is entitled, "Cereal for Europe."

On December 17th the men of the congregation gathered at the church in spite of near-zero weather to contribute and shell 600 bushels of corn. This corn was held in the elevator at Bremer, Iowa, awaiting the contributions of the other nine churches. When all the contributions are in it is hoped there will be nearly three carloads of corn which will be processed into cereal at the Ralston-Purina Mills in Davenport. The cereal is to be shipped to Europe from these churches to extend the spirit of "Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men."

Study Guide on "The Holy Earth"

• The Christian Rural Fellowship, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, publishes at five cents a copy a study guide for use with L. H. Bailey's book, "The Holy Earth." The book was originally published in 1915.

Rural Life Sunday

Rogation Sunday, Fifth after Easter
May 11, 1947

• Both rural and city churches observe Rural Life Sunday. Parishes consisting of several churches in a circuit or yoked field may make it a parish day for all services and a dinner on the grounds. Country and city pastors might "exchange pulpits" on this day. Local agricultural organizations, such as 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers, Farm Bureau, Grange and Farmers' Union, are often willing to attend and share in the services.

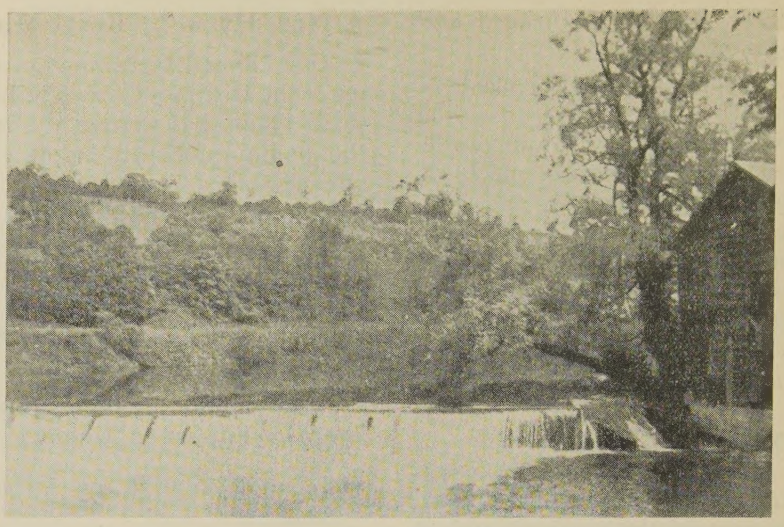
A rural play or pageant, or discussion groups, may be held in the evening. In certain states 4-H Clubs are especially interested in Rural Life Sunday. There has also been an observance of 4-H Club Sunday in some states on the Sixth Sunday after Easter.

Rural Life Sunday, the fifth after Easter, which has its roots in the Rogation Days, is a day set apart for emphasizing the meaning of Christianity for rural life; for the invocation of God's blessing upon the seed, the fruits of the soil, and the cultivators of the earth; for the consideration of justice for agriculture and the spiritual values of rural life. It was first observed in 1929, at the suggestion of the International Association of Agricultural Missions, and according to plans adopted by the Home Missions Council and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and many religious bodies.

An Order of Service is available from your denominational headquarters or the Committee on Town and Country. Send 5c for a single copy, or $1.00 a hundred.

Relief Abroad Still Needed

• Church World Service, 37 E. 36th St., New York 16, N. Y., representing the American Protestant churches and many other relief agencies, are endeavoring to increase all contributions of material aid and cash for relief abroad. Pleas from Europe indicate that the harvest of 1946 helped but reserve stocks are running out.



Area Town and Country Church Conferences

• Iowa Baptists followed the National Convocation with four one-day area conferences for Town and Country Churches. Meeting consecutively on November 19, 20, 21 and 22, they opened with a lunch at 12:30 and continued through the afternoon and evening. The four conferences had an average attendance of 69, which is considered to be very good.

Headed by Rev. Carlton W. Saywell, the director of Town and Country work for Baptists in Iowa, a team of competent persons formed the nucleus of the conferences. Dr. Halbert, the Executive Secretary of the Iowa Baptist State Convention, spoke on "Does the Town and Country Church Count?" Rev. Ward Hibbs, director of Baptist Town and Country Work in West Virginia spoke on "It Works in West Virginia."

Rev. C. R. McBride, who works out of the Baptist Rural Church Center in Green Lake, Wisconsin, on a program of land settlement, spoke on "Establishing Families on the Land and in the Church." These were supplemented by a layman at each conference who spoke on "The Layman's Job in the Town and Country Church." The women of the churches served pot-luck meals.

This is an excellent idea which should bear much fruit. All denominations which have a large rural constituency should encourage their state administrator to instigate similar programs.

One word of caution should be spoken. Enthusiasm built up by a team of good speakers and fine fellowship will not satisfactorily supplant facts and knowledge. Why not have the conferences spaced a few days apart and have the team lead the churches of the area in some self analysis of program and community needs? This would be foundation work for the concluding day of inspiration and fellowship.

—D. F. Pielstick

Lord's Acre Scripture-Prayer Verses

• The Religious Department, Farmers Federation, Asheville, N. C., lists in its literature the following verses suitable for use in connection with the Lord's Acre Project:

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.—*Psalm* 104: 24.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.—*James* 1: 22.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.—*Ecclesiastes* 9: 10.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.—*Matthew* 5: 16.

Neither will I offer . . . offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.—*II Samuel* 24: 24.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.—*Galatians* 6: 7.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—*Romans* 12: 21.

Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—*II Peter* 3: 18.

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The Country Pastor Studying His Community

SHIRLEY E. GREENE

• When Nehemiah, with the permission of Artaxerxes, returned to Jerusalem, the ruined "city of his fathers sepulchres," his first move, before the rulers were even aware of why he had come, was to make a quiet survey of the problems, needs, and resources of the community. In that he revealed a pastoral strategy which every country pastor could do well to emulate.

Suppose you are about to move into a new rural parish. Or suppose you have returned to your old parish (as some eight or nine hundred rural pastors recently did) from the National Convocation of the Church in Town and Country with a new vision of your vocation and a new zeal for its more effective performance. How, following the wisdom of Nehemiah, can you go about the task of more fully understanding your church and its role in its community setting?

Read One Book

My first recommendation is that you sit down in your study and read one book. It will only take you a couple of mornings, but it will open your eyes to vast new dimensions of depth and breadth and height to the vocation unto which you have been called. It will also put a good many practical tools into your hands for the task ahead. That book is Rockwell Smith's *The Church in Our Town* (Abingdon Cokesbury, $1.50).

The next step is to make a check list of what information you want about the community. Your first check list will inevitably be incomplete, for you can not know fully what you want to know until you have made some headway in your search. You will make frequent revisions of your check list of facts desired.

A Check List

I. *The Soil*

A. Its type and adaptability to crops

B. Its condition with respect to fertility and erosion

C. Its topographical characteristics

D. Its related climate, rainfall and temperatures

II. *The People*

A. How many, where located?

B. Is the population growing or declining?

C. Is the birth rate high or low?

D. Is the migration trend in or out of the community?

E. What are the prevalent nationality backgrounds?

F. Is the population homogeneous or heterogeneous in terms of racial, nationality and cultural traits?

III. *The Farming Enterprise*

A. The average size of farm, and the variations

B. The principle types or agriculture

C. The average value of land and the variations

D. The percentages of tenancy

E. Prevailing types of soil conservation and soil-building practice

IV. *The Standard of Living*

A. Average income and its uses

B. Percentage of homes with standard improvements and conveniences: Electricity, running water, automobiles, telephone, radio

C. Standards of health, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition

V. *Community Institutions*

A. Schools, their program and quality

B. Farm organizations, their program and the extent of farmer participation

C. Village organizations: service clubs, business associations, social clubs—their purposes, programs and the extent of participation

D. Library, its type of literature and volume of circulation

VI. *Community Relations*

A. What business and professional services does the village render to the village and farm community? What are the ethical standards governing such dealings? What are the prevalent attitudes between farmers and villagers?

B. What are the prevalent forces tending to friction and division in the community?

C. What are the prevalent forces tending to harmony and cooperation in the community?

D. How does the community think and talk of itself? (Community morale)

VII. *The Churches*

A. Number, location, size and denomination

B. Extent of church membership and participation; the trend in membership and participation over the years

C. Where are the unchurched? Geographically, economically and in terms of age groups?

D. What are the programs of the churches? How adequate to community needs?

E. What are the relationships between the churches? Positive and negative

This list is by no means exhaustive, and not every item in it will be applicable to any specific church situation. Use it only as a point of departure.

How does one go about to amass the facts called for by such a check list? The first rule is to make full use of the already existing sources of information about your community. The pastor's time is too valuable to waste any of it digging out raw data which someone else already has assembled. Some of the information you want will be found in print; some of it in the heads of people.

Some Sources

Among sources for general background, the most fruitful will be the U. S. Census of Population and of Agriculture (available from the Supt. of Documents, Washington,

U.S.D.A. Photograph

D. C. Order the 1940 Census of Population, 1st and 2nd series, and the 1940 Census of Agriculture, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd series for your own state. These come in pamphlet form at about 15c each); and the publications of the Agricultural Experiment Station of your State College of Agriculture (A free check list will be sent you by the College of Agriculture on request, and you may order at least one copy of as many of the bulletins as you wish without charge). These materials will give you a wealth of background information about your state, your type-of-farming area, your county and township. None of it will likely be presented specifically in terms of your community.

In the County

Your next source will be various records within the county: in the office of the Supt. of Schools, the county welfare office, the county branch offices of Farmer's Home Administration, R.E.A., S.C.S., Farm Bureau, etc. Much of the information on file in these offices is confidential and you will have to establish your right of access to it, by demonstrating your ability to keep confidences, and your genuine interest in people and their welfare. Your first visit to any of these offices will probably yield little concrete information, but it should establish your contact, assure the official in charge of your genuine desire to cooperate with him in every possible way, and leave the door open for return visits whenever you begin to sense the need for new facts, which he may possess. Not to be overlooked, also, are the records of your church, if any.

Among the People

Now among the people who may have valuable and helpful information for you in their heads, we can list these same county officials and federal representatives, the county agricultural agent, the local bankers, merchants and doctors, the old timers in the community, your township officials, your church officials and fellow pastors. Again they possess much confidential information and they will need to be convinced that your inquiries are not motivated by idle curiosity and that you will protect their confidence in every case.

Beyond all these ready-made sources, you will want still further information which can be derived only from direct investigation. For this purpose there are several techniques available. The nature of the information and the nature of the situation will have to indicate the techniques to be used. In general the more informal you can make your technique in a rural community the better for your standing as a pastor. Among the techniques you may have occasion to use are the canvass, the questionnaire, the sampling, the interview, the case study and the diary.

A Canvass

The canvass involves going from door to door throughout the whole community. This method should only be used as a last resort for facts which cannot be obtained effectively in any other way. In a rural community its use will need to be ac

mpanied by a good deal of care-l publicity as to why these ques-ons are being asked and to what es the information is to be put. 'hen it is a canvass concerning urch affiliation or participation, will be much more successful if onsored by the churches jointly an if conducted by one alone.

The questionnaire may be used rough the mail, or circulated in a urch gathering, a community eeting, the schools, or perhaps rough the courtesy of the mer-ants. Questions have to be framed ith great care. They should be solutely clear and they should be ept to a minimum. Complete cov-age is very rare. In interpreting nd using partial returns you must ways try to make sure that your turns represent a fair sample of e whole group you are studying. or example, if you should discover at all your returns from a given uestionnaire came from farm own-r-operators, it would not be fair to ssume that the replies represented ccurately the conditions or atti-ides of all farmers including ten-nts.

ampling

The sampling may be for purposes f making direct interviews or cir-ulating questionnaires. It attempts get a view of the whole by ex-mining a cross section. The prob-ems of getting your sample big nough and representative enough re quite technical. How deeply ou go into that aspect of sampling ill depend on the nature of the data you are seeking, and how important you regard scientific accuracy for your purpose.

The interview may develop as either a very formal question and answer procedure, or most informally as a street corner conversation or pastoral call. In the rural community it will tend to the informal type. I hope no pastor needs to be warned to wait until he is back in his study, or at least back in his car to make his notes.

Case studies may be of individuals or of institutions. They ordinarily involve observation over a considerable period of time, and may entail the use of several of the other study techniques. The result is usually a thorough-going description of the particular case which was studied. To have scientific validity in any other sense than the historical, it must be shown to be a typical case.

A Good Diary

The diary, when used in social study, is a day by day record of events which have significance for the study. It implies the technique of study known as particular observation. That is to say, you undertake to study the situation, movement or trend at the same time that you take an active personal part in it. Insofar as your study concerns itself with the contemporary moving life of the community, you, as the pastor, almost inevitably do become a participant observer. A good diary may not be at all amiss.

A final word. I have spoken of the importance of studying to understand your community, the areas of information desired, the sources and techniques of acquiring information. Let me add with great emphasis that mere information, in and of itself, never solved a problem, or changed a trend, or saved a church. Bare facts are sterile. Community study by itself is futile. The whole assumption here is that you study the facts in order to make appraisals, project program, and act. Facts are fuel. You and your people must add the flame of imagination, consecration and enthusiasm, which will cause the fire of the Christian enterprise in your community to glow like the ancient bush which burned but was not consumed. Nehemiah did not stop with a survey.

Finally, I mention a tool that may help you with the technical aspects of your study. It is:

"Know Your On Church," by Shirley E. Greene. (Pamphlet outline for an Intensive Case Study of a Local Church. Available for 10c from Town and Country Dept., Congregational Christian Churches, 287 Fourth Ave., New York 10.

The Lutheran Rural Churches

• Rev. A. Malin, Wellsburg, Iowa, Chairman of the Rural Life Committee of Wartburg Synod, writes a leaflet entitled "To Have and to Hold." It describes the interest of Lutherans in the rural community and discusses the importance of the rural church in relation to the church at large. "For the very good of the city churches let us work hard in the country today and in the future." Other titles are: "New Day for Rural Churches" and "Soul and Soil." The titles may be ordered from The Lutheran Literary Board, Box 573, Burlington, Iowa.

James Hearst's Poems

• In the December issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH Rev. Ralph Grieser, in his article, "Country Men," referred to a book of poems by James Hearst, published under the same title. We have had several requests for further information about the poems. The book was published in 1937 by the Prairie Press, Muscatine, Iowa, and the price is $2.00.

Signs for Town and Country Churches

How To Use Them

LAURIS B. WHITMAN

• There is no necessity to defend the publication of a statement on Church Signs. Here is a need which has been long felt. Travelers and those who have migrated to new communities commonly comment on the failure of churches to provide identifying signs. This pamphlet, issued as a part of our United Emphasis for 1947-1948, attempts to stimulate churches to proper identifying signs. The placing of signs may be an important part of the church's ministry.

Where

In placing a sign, the first question is, "Where shall the sign be put?"

At first thought, the answer to this question seems simple. The complexities which may enter into the answer were pointed out by the comments of a pastor in a South Dakota rural community. He said, "Out where I come from, we have to fasten the church sign onto the building. We're in open range country and the cattle will knock down any sign that we try to erect on posts set in the ground."

The statement of this pastor gives two definite suggestions for locating a church sign. If it is to be placed in front of a meeting house it can either be attached to the church or erected on posts set in the ground. Another simple arrangement is to mount the sign on a foundation of concrete.

Actual location of the church sign will be determined by the position of the church on the street, the presence of obstructions, the avenue of pedestrian (not automobile) traffic, the elevation of the church lot, and other factors. The idea is that the sign should be seen and read by the largest possible number of people. It should face, if possible, the street which has the greatest flow of traffic, and it should be placed near enough to the street for the passer-by to read it.

For many churches, one sign, wisely placed, will prove sufficient. Usually it is enough that the sign indicate the name of the church, and perhaps the date of its founding. It may also give the pastor's name and address and the time of the stated services, but this information may more properly be carried on a bulletin board.

Many churches, however, find that they need to erect more than one sign. This is particularly true where the church is not located on a main street or highway. In these cases, directional signs may be placed at near-by intersections. Since these signs only guide people to the church they contain no more than the name of the church with an arrow pointing in its direction. In the open country, it is well to give the distance to the church. Such signs are to supplement the sign in front of the church.

How

Many pastors, following the example of Jesus, learned the carpenter's trade before becoming ministers. At least many pastors do creditable work as carpenters. Therefore, many a minister is qualified to construct and erect a church sign. But there is a better way.

Namely, making the erection of a church sign a group project. Here is something within the capacity of a men's group. Not only will they render a definite service through the contribution of labor and skill but the project provide an experience of fellowship.

Making a sign may be a project for the young people's group, particularly for those who take a shop course in school. Members of the Baptist Youth Fellowship, committed to The Discipleship Plan may eagerly take hold of such a project. One of the stories related at the Discipleship Convocation of 1946 is about a youth group who made a sign for a Negro church.

Experience indicates that there is little need for going outside the church family for the help needed in building a sign. There may be one qualification: Unless the church has in its constituency some one who can do professional quality lettering, it is best to have this done in a sign shop. The best craftsmanship in sign building can be completely nullified by crude lettering.

Materials

Materials for constructing the church sign must be chosen carefully. Several types of material are suitable. A sign can be made of sheet metal with a frame of wood. Some types of composition board, such as Masonite, are suitable. It is possible if good clamps are available, to glue a number of boards into one piece of the desired width. If this is done joints must be carefully matched, waterproof glue must be used and sanding must be done carefully before the sign is painted.

Probably the best material is weather-proof plywood. This can be secured in the needed size. It provides a smooth surface for finishing and will resist the changing weather. Furthermore, it is inexpensive.

Consideration should be given to finding the sign. Usually the sign will have a white background. If this is true, one or two coats of flat white paint should be applied first as a filler and base. This can then be covered by a coat of gloss white upon which the letters can be placed. Lettering should be done in a black paint of similar type to that used for the background. It is also possible to use Decal letters which may be applied easily. They are usually available in assorted styles and sizes at school supply houses or stores which carry painter's supplies. The entire surface may then be covered with a coat of clear plastic or lacquer varnish as an added preservative.

If the sign is to be supported by posts, they should be set in the ground to a depth of at least two-and-a-half to three feet. The post will last much longer if the part which goes into the ground is carefully creosoted before use. Added strength will be gained by setting the posts in concrete. Posts of reinforced concrete can be made both attractive and durable.

There is a growing tendency for urches to use the commercial type Neon sign. If good taste and re-aint are used, these signs may be tractive. However, they are usually pensive and are probably better ited to larger communities than ose served by most town and coun-y churches.

Sign Pays Dividends

Rev. Lem. R. Carter, Director of own and Country Work in Wash-gton, tells a story about the po-ntial values of a church sign.

"I was once pastor of a church that eeded a sign, but I could get no tion. Finally a layman, who sym-ithized with my request, had a sign ade and paid for it himself.

"A few Sundays later, I talked ith a new family who had come to ir church for the first time. In the urse of the conversation, I asked em how they had happened to me to our church. They told me at they had seen the new sign. hey had been out of touch with the urch for a number of years, and e sign had led to a family decision attend church again.

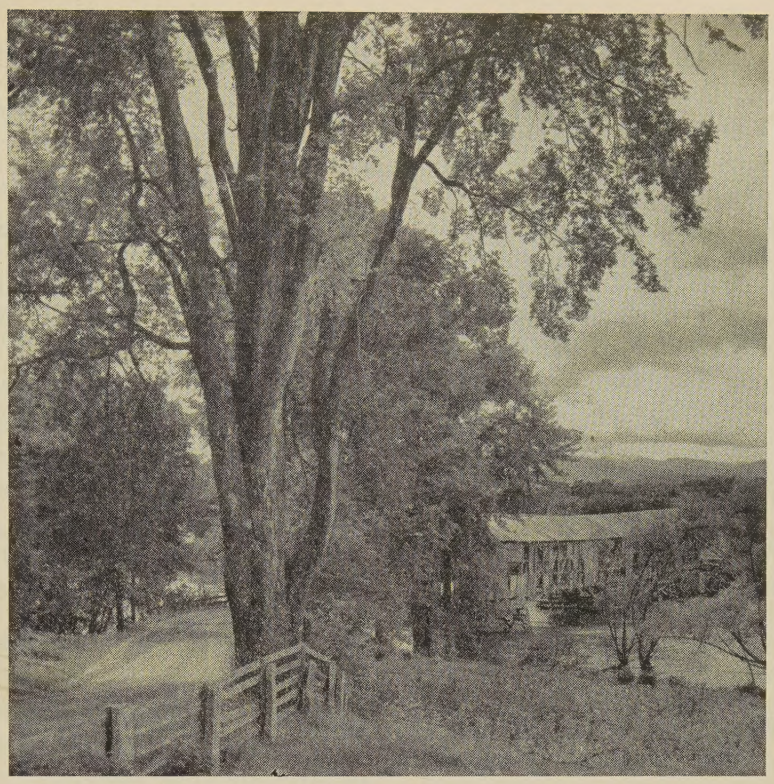
"After a few months, the only son me into the church upon profes-on of faith and baptism. This young an became a tither and an active urch worker. He later became the nday School superintendent and deacon. The father and mother ined soon afterwards and the fa-er, too, became a deacon.

"That sign cost $18.00 but this ther and son, who came because of e sign, became leaders and brought any hundreds of dollars into the urch treasury; a good dividend, I ould say. But the best dividend was e fine Christian living and the nsecrated leadership of these peo-e."

ffice of the Committee on Town and Country

Beginning January 1, 1947, Ben-n Y. Landis returned from a leave absence and assumed duties as sec-tary of the Committee on Town d Country and Managing Editor TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH.

Rev. Don F. Pielstick began serv-es as Associate Secretary of the mmittee on Town and Country.



Old covered bridge at Freburg, Maine — *A. Devaney, Inc., N. Y.*

A Prayer at a Reunion

• O God, the Father of all mankind, mercifully consider these families gathered together for renewal of the bonds of affection and comradeship. As we come today from many places to bring together the threads of past associations wilt thou be the tie that binds our hearts.

We ask today that thy benediction rest upon our young people who recently have left the security of our homes to find a place amid new scenes and associations. May these days of separation not remove them from our spiritual fellowship. May they find satisfaction and security in their present place of habitation.

We praise thee for the lives of those who have been taken from us in death; comfort thou those who in life were closest to them; bind up the wounds of those to whom our period of separation has brought hurt; bring brightness to the lives of any in whose soul the light has been dimmed or which sadness has darkened.

We commend to thee our young. May they grow to be mature men and women of responsibility and purity and strength of character. Let them find in the comradeships of this day, and of their family life, such joy and a lifting up of vision that they will always want to be true to the best hopes we have for them. May their minds be stayed on thee and their trust placed confidently in thee.

As a large family we praise thee; we seek thee as the Lord of our lives; we would be loyal and loving children in thy great family which knows no divisions. Through our laughter, our play, our conversations, our songs and prayers of this reunion day renew us for service to thee and to one another. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

—MARK RICH

Report on Evangelism Available

• Rev. Edwin L. Becker announces that he has available a number of copies of the report of the Commission on Evangelism and Church Extension of the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, held at Des Moines in November. He will send these while the supply lasts on request to him at 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

Salvation Army Service Units in Rural Areas

JOHN T. SEDDON

• Eighty years ago The Salvation Army undertook to carry the Word of God to those who would not voluntarily seek it. Following the Biblical injunction to spread the Message along the highways and byways, The Salvation Army journeyed to the ends of the earth, preaching the Gospel, succoring the afflicted in wars, famine, floods, plagues and the greater disaster of ignorance of Christ's Word.

That, from the beginning, was the mission of The Salvation Army, and that remains the mission and sacred duty today.

Our Parish

Our parish is the world. We can not put frontiers upon our ministry. The lamb that is lost, the distressed soul, no matter how far away, is still the deep concern of every Salvationist.

Years ago, in selecting sites for our urban posts (Corps) and outposts, we placed them in the locations of the greatest need, in industrial cities and larger towns. In those days rural areas were far removed from the trials and temptations of the industrialized cities and received only secondary attention.

Time has proved the wisdom of this policy. Upon the foundation thus laid The Salvation Army has prospered in both opportunity and means of service.

Its work has divinely prospered and its light has spread so that today it reaches beyond the urban or corps area into some of the remotest rural regions.

Needs of Rural Areas

Time has created a great change and these rural areas, once the region of God's peace and beauty, now contain slums, racked with disease, drink, immorality, crime and delinquency. Health and welfare services are sorely needed.

The rural areas hold millions of God's children, struggling with want, unshod, sick, unattended, confused and unguided. The spiritual need cries out to us; the physical and welfare need of some areas is positively dreadful.

There were in 1939, 2,800,000 farms in these areas which yielded a gross farm income of less than $600.00; nearly 2,000,000 that yielded less than $400.00 and more than 1,000,000 others that grossed less than $250.00. On these farms lived approximately 12,000,000 adults and children and of the males of draft age, 53 percent were rejected by selective service.

In these wide-spread rural areas, it is estimated that the following health conditions exist:

7,000	mothers die from childbearing every year
3,000	of these mothers could be saved annually
100,000	babies die in the first year of birth
31,000	of these babies could be saved
35,000	children are diabetic
200,000	suffer from epilepsy
175,000	are tubercular
500,000	suffer from rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart
1,000,000	have some sort of hearing defects
30,000,000	need some kind of dental care
10,000,000	have visual defects

The rural communities do not have the welfare funds, the hospitals, free clinics, the day nurseries and school lunches, the free glasses and scores of other services to which The Salvation Army is already making a substantial contribution on an ever widening and progressing scale.

Rural Service Units

The development of the rural Service Unit of The Salvation Army is an accepted national project and one of the objectives of the present National Campaign.

Naturally, a new program such as this must be studied, examined and constantly criticised and refined. It too must come by the trial and error way. However, within the last ten years more than 1,100 *Service Units* have been developed, they are taking on larger and wider interests as they become more and more permanently established.

Places Already Organized

In the six New England States alone there are no less than 400 Service Units and the State of California has more than 200, Northeastern Pennsylvania 114, Nebraska within seven weeks established 18. These along with others in various States have been subjected to real tests. It has been proven, day after day, as an instrument worthy of The Salvation Army, conforming to the highest principles inherent in Salvation Army basic conceptions.

The great rural fields stretch out before us, with more than 30,000 communities in which the Service Units can be established. Undoubtedly there will be troubles and obstacles. The going has never been easy and waiting has never been the policy of The Salvation Army.

Two of the latest addition to the Rural Service Unit program have been the Vitamin and Dental Care Projects, on which there are pamphlets.

"Country Church" McLaughlin

• An appreciation of the services of Dr. Henry W. McLaughlin, Presbyterian Church U. S., has appeared in *The Presbyterian Outlook*. The opening item is as follows:

"Many years ago now, when Henry W. McLaughlin was shortly out of seminary, the two-wheel gig in which he was riding with a West Virginia mountaineer struck a log, throwing the men and a Bible full of sermon notes helter-skelter. The mountaineer, struggling to his feet, looked at the young preacher's papers all over the place. 'Gosh, man,' he said, 'you do believe in spreadin' the gospel!' In more ways, and more effective ways, than this, Henry McLaughlin for fifty years has been spreading the gospel."

Multi-Denominational Churches

H. PAUL DOUGLASS

In the past when a "united" or ommunity" church has felt that it s outgrown its federated character d has wished to abandon its old nominational connections, it has nerally thought that it had to rt to membership in some one dmination or else to turn "undeminational." There is, however, a owing class of "multi-denominanal" churches. They have most equently arisen when the compoents of a federated church have own so closely together that they el themselves one, and see no reason r keeping up separate membership ts. Why must such churches be nfronted with the necessity of benging to either *one* denomination to *none?* Why may they not beng to *both?*

At least it has come to pass that veral score of American churches e listed in more than one denomitional yearbook, while a considerly larger number of ministers aintain full and unimpaired standg in more than one denomination once. These duplications play avoc with the water-tight compartentalizations of the denominations. ut why need the closest local ingration require total loss of deminational connection?

Two case studies describe churches cognized as in full standing by ore than one denomination. Should ot there be more of them?

he United Church of yde Park

In 1930 a Congregational and a esbyterian Church, located about ur blocks apart in the vicinity adcent to the University of Chicago, ited on the basis of the conviction at neither alone was commensurate th the opportunity presented by exceptional community, which ey believed would be better and ore adequately served by one united urch.

The United Church carries the btitle "Congregational-Presbyteian" but is a merger rather than a federation, with one set of officers and a single membership. The membership lists continue to be kept separately and new members may indicate under what national denomination they wish to be enrolled; but they function in every respect as a single body and the properties are vested in the United Church.

Benevolences are divided on a prorata basis. Local government combines Presbyterian-Congregational usages. In setting up the United Church a careful combination of the ritual forms of the uniting bodies was effected and the merger has proved a distinct practical success.

The minister is required to belong to local ecclesiastical bodies of both the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations; and changes in the constitution are to be made only after consultation with authorities of both denominations. The property would revert jointly to the two denominations if the church were ever discontinued.

Nevertheless, the judgment of competent observers is that union did not greatly change the psychology of the two previous congregations, nor revolutionize the atmosphere of the church. Its identification with the community is hardly its special characteristic in the sense that such identification is frequently realized in smaller and homogeneous communities. This difficulty it shares with all types of community churches located in complex urban situations.

Peoples Church, East Lansing

The Peoples Church, East Lansing, Michigan, was first Congregational in its affiliation, but later organized into an interdenominational church with Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians cooperating, and a long list of other communions included in the membership. Each of the cooperating communions pledged and paid $25,000 toward the church building, which cost $400,000. The remainder was cared for by local constituency and interested friends. The annual maintenance and building fund payments are borne by East Lansing.

The minister writes:

"Whatever measure of success Peoples Church has enjoyed thus far has been due to the steady loyalty of its members and constituents, the constantly cooperative attitude of the four denominations, both national and state; the glad participation of the hundreds of students through the years and the fact that the world seems to be looking for examples of a uniting Protestantism."

Becker Named Chairman

• Rev. Edwin L. Becker of the United Christian Missions Society, Disciples of Christ, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana, has been named Chairman of the Committee on Town and Country. Mr. Becker came to his present position after a rural pastorate in Nebraska. In that pastorate he had a special interest in youth work.

Rural Pastors Form Association

• At the Texas A. and M. College, College Station, a rural pastors' association, representing most of the Protestant denominations in Texas, was formed following the first statewide rural church conference sponsored by the College. The Association will aim to encourage an exchange of experience and put pastors in touch with sources of useful information that will help them in their parish work.

The Spiritual Values of Contributing to Relief

HENRY A. FAST

• Participation in intensive relief enterprises has built up among us a warm and genuine spirit of sympathy for people in distress. The Mennonite Central Committee does not need to push our people. They are pushing us. Reports from returning relief workers, their letters from the field and the letters of victims of starvation have moved us on the one hand by their revelations of stark tragedy and suffering and, on the other hand, by their pathetic expressions of gratitude for the relief given and the love shown.

Our people could not join fully in the war program. To thoughtful and sensitive persons that was a heavy burden upon their soul. Here was now an opportunity for release of the deep reservoir of Christian love and compassion long restrained under war pressures and it overflowed in a generous outpouring of benevolent activity.

It made our people appreciate more keenly their own blessings and privileges. Constantly hearing about the tragic needs and sufferings of others made them more grateful for what they had.

Keen Sense of Stewardship

It developed in our churches a keener sense of stewardship. When millions were starving or else suffering untold hardship then, before God, a person was accountable for what he did with what he had received. Our people gave as never before. When during the war years our 125,000 church members had already contributed in voluntary gifts over $3,000,000 for Civilian Public Service, it would seem that they would have little more to give. But they contributed this year at the rate of over half a million dollars in cash and over $1,300,000 in gifts of clothing, food, flour, etc. All this of course was donation above the support of the usual benevolences of the church. As people gave, their hearts appeared to grow warmer. The more they sacrificed the more they were ready to do. Civilian Public Service men who had served four and five years without pay volunteered to serve two and three more years at $10.00 per month plus maintenance. Here seemed to be a genuine verification of the story of the loaves and the fishes.

It stimulated among us an interest in the people being served. Never had our people on so wide a scale identified themselves intimately with such a variety of people.

Last year several carloads of flour were donated by a small country community in bags that gave the name and address of the chairman of this local flour relief project. In response there descended upon them a veritable avalanche of 400 letters almost all written in the Dutch language which they couldn't read but the spirit of the letters they understood perfectly and their message was not lost on them.

This service, as also the presence of foreign students in our colleges, has given them an opportunity to understand sympathetically the attitude of the people of occupied countries toward their former enemies. Having this clearer grasp of the problem, we believe we have come to a clearer understanding what perhaps ought to be done about it.

Sense of Brotherhood

These contacts and this service has developed in our churches a more deeply-felt sense of Christian brotherhood. There are members of the household of faith the world over and the human family belongs together and its members are mutually dependent on one another.

This cry of human need and the effort to do something about it has given our people a new and a very real subject for prayer. Nothing so vitalizes prayer as a staggering burden of need and a cry for help.

This shoulder to shoulder effort to relieve a great tragedy has united our people as never before and they are amazed to discover what they can do together. Persons who had not respected each other before now gained an appreciation of the other when they discovered his compassion and his self-forgetful energy in behalf of suffering people. They learned to treat with regard and respect other Christian groups who differed from them in matters of belief and practice. That has had a very wholesome disciplinary value in our churches. Mennonite groups which seven or eight years ago would not have thought of working together have in these years labored together in this enterprise with a brotherly accord that is nothing short of marvelous, and with it all they discovered a new joy in the fellowship of a service of love.

Material Aid

It is remarkable what the material aid program has contributed in this respect. At the clothing centers during these years one could find every day women from churches within a radius of 40-50 miles repairing, cleaning and packing clothing in the Name of Christ and thinking of the neighbor in need who fell among the robbers. In the canning program and in the gathering of carloads of wheat and flour people from different branches of Mennonites and from other church groups found themselves working side by side. Here they discovered one another and found what joy there could be in the fellowship of toil in a labor of love. This community of interest drew them together into a unity of spirit they had not known before and which they hardly dreamed was possible.

Our people are beginning to recognize more keenly how futile it is merely to keep people alive unless we do something about the hate, fear, mistrust, etc., that causes people to destroy one another and to inflict untold suffering on the innocent. So they are beginning to realize the desperate need for a Christian ministry of reconciliation. Last year a teen-age group of Christian young people sent some Christmas boxes to Europe. Later they received a letter from a young man in Germany expressing deep gratitude and adding: "You always forgive and help." This remark

ade a profound impression on the ung people and the church. Our ople are beginning to feel that is ministry of reconciliation is the ost important service we can nder.

Peaceful World

Our people are beginning to see e bearing of this ministry of relief d reconciliation on the problem of ilding a peaceful world. They ink that many of our relief techques would be transferable in any areas of international relaons even including the political lations. We are learning to think long-range terms of reconstrucon rather than of mere emergency lief and of stop-gap measures. That rves to strengthen and discipline ith.

It has lifted our missionary sights d definitely strengthened the misonary interest among us. It is thrillg to see some of our smaller Mennite groups that had no missiony program or interest now enusiastically get together to can ousands of cans of chicken, beef, d pork, vegetables and fruit to nd to strangers across the seas "in e Name of Christ," and to see some their Civilian Public Service men lunteer for relief service. Occaonally non-Mennonite neighbors d neighboring communities have en challenged by the zeal of these ople and have exclaimed: "If a all group of Mennonites can do is why can't we? We should do " We praise God if our work is encouragement to others in their ristian service.

But our people are also convinced at relief work in itself is no cure r the mortal sickness of the world. sus Christ alone has the cure for is and we must be more active in tnessing to His saving power and ve and in proving its validity in r life and service.

It has also helped to lift the spirual level of women's sewing soety circles. It has sometimes been id of them that they sew garments d rip reputations. That has very dom been an entirely just charterization of our Mission societies t, nevertheless, this relief in the ame of Christ has definitely helped to lift the spiritual tone of sewing society meetings.

"Driving cows home on an October evening" *Philip Gendreau, N. Y.*

Rethinking Our Faith

Our people have been challenged again and again by our slogan, "In the Name of Christ." We have been led to rethink our Christian faith and to examine the reality and meaning of our Christian life. On the other hand we have also been led to a new appreciation of the meaning and power of service "in the Name of Christ." Again and again people in relief areas have expressed in word and letters how they were struck by this everpresent label of greeting attached to every garment and every package of food. The package of food, the beautifully stitched quilt, the clean and wearable suit of clothes, the personal service given in the Name of Christ and contributed by a person who tries to radiate the spirit of Christ immediately lifts the service, in the mind of the recipient, above the level of self-interest or condescension or political intrigue. For a gift or a service brought in the Name of Christ people become inexpressibly glad and grateful and they praise God for His goodness and providence.

In addition to all this there is the blessing that has come and that will come in an increasing measure to our churches with the return of relief workers who, constrained by the love of Christ, have given years of service in areas of tragic need. That is bound to heighten our sense of mission.

Spiritual values like the above are without money and without price in comparison with any material cost or any sacrifice of time and effort involved. We have received far more than we have given.

Rural Churchmen's Seminar in Washington

• Rev. Shirley E. Greene, Merom, Indiana, who is Agricultural Relations Secretary of the Council for Social Action, Congregational Christian Church, has announced plans for a March Rural Churchmen's Seminar in Washington.

"Our purpose in conducting a Rural Churchmen's Seminar is to develop a company of town and country pastors and laymen across the nation who will have not only a genuine understanding of the major rural problems of our national life, but will know from first hand contact how the federal government through legislation and the U. S. Department of Agriculture is handling these problems. Also, there will be an opportunity to meet the farm lobbies in Washington and other secular and religious groups interested in agriculture."

"Our Holy Earth"

• The Iowa Agricultural Extension Service, Ames, Iowa, has prepared a mimeographed circular entitled "Our Holy Earth." Subtopics include: "Spiritual Factors in Man's Relation to the Land," "Man's Gift from God," "We Are Warned," "We Live the Soil," "Our Goals," "Sowing the Seed," and "We Cultivate and Harvest." We understand this is available on application.

Comity Principles Revised and Adopted

• At a meeting in January, 1947, the Committee on Town and Country revised slightly and adopted a statement on Comity Principles for rural communities which had been formulated and approved in 1928. The committee also authorized a thorough re-study of the question. The statement is as follows:

1. A field shall be regarded as adequately occupied when for each 1,000 population, potentially homogeneous and reasonably accessible from a given point, there is present one church meeting at least the following minimum standard of service and equipment:

Resident pastor devoting full time to work of the ministry.
Public worship every Sabbath.
Sunday school meeting regularly.
Vacation church school annually.
Youth programs.
Adequate program of community service.
Edifice reasonably adequate to needs of the community for worship, religious training and service;

provided that where a church has or is proposed to have the exclusive occupancy of a field it will receive in Christian fellowship all varieties of Evangelical Christians without subjecting them to doctrinal or other tests which do not accord with the standards of their respective faiths.

2. Conversely, a condition of overchurching and competition shall be held to exist where the number of churches in the community exceeds the above ratio if at least one church per 1,000 people maintains this minimum standard of service and equipment.

3. Where, within the terms of this definition, an aided church is maintained in competition with a self-supporting church (i.e., a church which draws its current support exclusively from the given community), the latter, if it meets the minimum standards, shall be regarded as entitled to the field and the grant in aid to the competing church should be annually decreased looking to the complete cessation of aid at the end of three years.

4. Where no one of the churches in an over-churched community is self-supporting as above defined, the denominations concerned should confer at once to determine what adjustment should be made.

The following alternative methods of adjustment are generally recognized as applicable under these circumstances:

The unconditional withdrawal of one denomination in favor of the other, or

The withdrawal of both in favor of a third not now present, or

The formation of a federated church, a denominationally related community church, a larger parish, or other type of cooperative organization.

5. No new enterprise should be initiated with missionary support in contravention of the above principles.

6. Mission aid for building purposes should not be given a competing church as above defined.

7. In the expenditure of missionary money in the Town and Country field the following objects should be regarded as of primary importance:

a) As a first responsibility to build up the highest type of service standard for each church which now has or which is proposed to have the exclusive responsibility for the field.

b) To strengthen particularly churches which face situations of unusual difficulty or unusual strategic importance.

c) Adequately to occupy now unoccupied communities and to serve now unreached populations.

8. Where the work of a given church is to be discontinued, the policy should be definitely to dissolve its organization and unite its membership with other existing churches and to make a decision as to disposal of the abandoned building or buildings.

9. As a step on the way to complete cooperation, competition is held to be particularly unjustifiable if between churches belonging to the same one of the following recognized groups:

a) Liturgical churches;
b) Churches practicing the baptism of believers only;
c) Churches of other denominations represented in the council.

The Challenge of the Rural Ministry

• Rev. Donald O. Mills, Two Rivers, Wisconsin, writes on "The Challenge of the Rural Ministry" in *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register* for January:

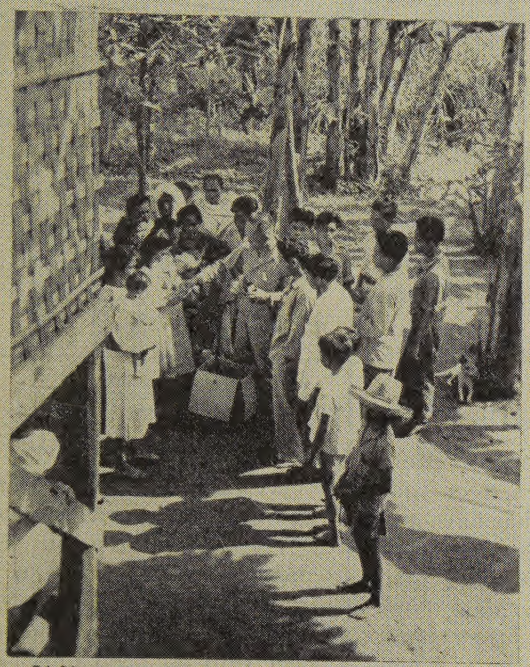
"The rural church offers an opportunity to build community in the truest sense. The minister can know his people, and they can know each other, for the neighborhood is, or can be made, homogeneous. The intimate and stable relationships which make it possible for the minister to win the confidence of the people in himself and the cause set the stage for the only really effective evangelism.

"And all statistical disadvantage to the contrary, the country church has the best field for recruiting. Nationally about 50 per cent of the population is unchurched, but the proportion is higher in rural areas. While the number of full-time farmers is being progressively reduced, the number of non-farm country people is mounting rapidly. Decentralization is more than an attempt to escape the atomic bomb. As our people are being drawn back to 'the holy earth,' it is up to the church to remember the land, to keep it holy.

"The rural minister has the chance to exercise perhaps the most determinative influence in American life. It is a well-known fact that cities and city churches do not reproduce themselves. In four generations ten church members in the city will produce three and one-half members; in the country, twenty-two.

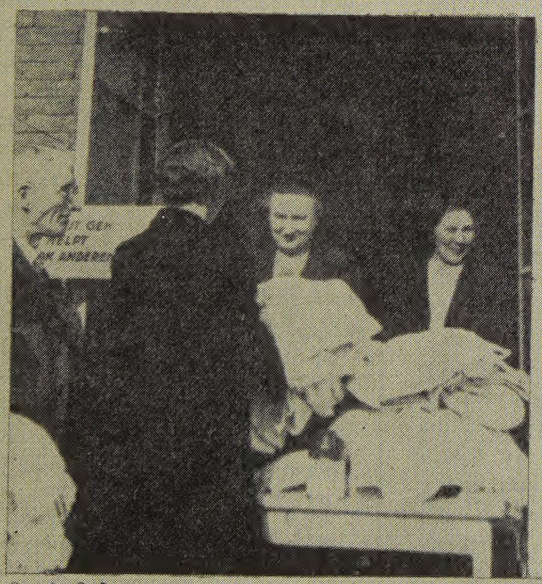
"The city skims the cream off the rural church to recruit its teachers, doctors, lawyers, captains of industry, scientists, and labor leaders. Our present impasse in morality can be resolved at the grass roots. The intelligent and courageous country preacher may not get the credit, but he will know what, with the help of God, he has been able to do."

OUR GIFTS GET THERE!



Gifts of vitamins and medicines from American churches received in the Philippines.

Church women of America, through Church World Service, sent these diapers which have just been presented to the Masaryk Institute for mothers and nurslings in Czechoslovakia.



Grateful women of Holland smilingly distribute clothing and bedding received from America.

Earnestly eager to get their share of rice, these Chinese children wait their turn.

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

37 East 36th Street

New York 16, N.Y.

Book Review

Song of the Earth. By Fred D. Wentzel. Philadelphia: The Christian Education Press. 1946. $2.00. Illustrated.

This little book on rural life might well be called an antidote for cynics because it sings of things that are elemental as well as eternal.

The author quotes a poem by Richard C. Wentzel:

"Sing me not of the sensual blisses,
Praising the joys of ephemeral worth—
Raise the grand anthem of God and His growing:
Sing me the song of the earth."

Fred D. Wentzel, the author, is a teacher as well as a preacher. As a teacher he uses song, poetry, poetic prose and picture to help his readers understand the kinship between the earth, man and God.

Even a young child unable to read, will catch a sense of beauty, mystery and even of awe toward the Creator and His creatures as he looks at the seventy-three carefully selected and arranged photographs.

These pictures also show the difference in approach to the earth. When man is unfriendly toward the earth, seeking her only for his own selfish ends, cutting her trees, robbing the hills and valleys, then she becomes strange and terrible and leaves him "bewildered and desolate."

When he approaches her with reverence and a feeling of kinship she gives up her secrets and all mankind is blessed.

The book has a Foreword written by Dr. Mark A. Dawber of the Home Missions Council that gives a keen insight into the contents of the book which is divided into eight chapters.

The preacher is evident in the chapter headings: "The Whole Earth Sings," "We Belong to the Earth," "Brothers of the Earth," "Pageant of the Seasons," "Greatness of Little Things," "Friends and Neighbors," "Homeless on the Earth," "Spires against the Sky."

From the word pictures about the tiny humming bird to those relating to St. Francis, George Washington Carver and the Master himself we catch something of the beauty, the joy and the majesty of discovering the kinship of earth, man and their Maker.

The Song of the Earth is like a fresh, cool breeze after a week of sultry, fog laden atmosphere. When the book shelves are filled with writings on personal, national and international problems, it is refreshing to find an author who dares present the oft forgotten fact "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

—Blanche S. Felton

"One Foot on the Land"

• In a new booklet Ralph A. Felton has compiled "stories of sixteen successful rural churches" that have appeared in the *Farm Journal* and *The Progressive Farmer.* The first article, for instance, is about the work of Russell Hoy, the country minister who operates a farm. His story appeared in Town and Country Church for March, 1945, and was entitled "A Small Farm for the Pastor." Then a little later comes the one about "Corn Unincorporated," where the Mennonite Brethren have done so much for relief.

Under the title of "Jacob's Ladder" is the story about the varied activities going on at Bricks, N. C., a rural life school, where tenants are trained to become owners and where a credit union is prominent in the project. Professor Felton writes about the sixteen country ministers with deep insight and feeling. There are accounts of methods used, written in a journalistic style. Thus they are methods material with an interesting flavor. Single copies are 35 cents each from Ralph A. Felton, Madison, N. J.; rates are quoted on quantities.

Next Issue

Methodist Rural Conference—James M. Sells
Rural Health Plans—Don F. Pielstick
Red Cross Rural Chapters—Donald Goldthorpe
United Church in Wooded Hills—Warren P. Waldo

The Size of the Rural Parish

• One of the numerous and useful Felton pamphlets is entitled "The Size of the Rural Parish." It is available at 10c a copy from Dr. Ralph A. Felton, Department of the Rural Church, Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey. Topics treated include:

I. A Comparison of Rural Parishes in 1857, 1897 and 1937
II. The Membership Needed to Pay an Adequate Salary
III. Enlarged Parishes
IV. Travel Expenses of Rural Pastors

The Enlarged Town & Country Church

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The Committee on Town and Country decided to take this step as a venture of faith. Receipts from subscriptions have thus far been sufficient to provide an eight-page but not a sixteen-page journal. The hope is that there will be many interested cooperators who will say so many good words about Town and Country Church that we will have enough subscribers, even at the present subscription rate, to carry the venture.

What You Can Do

There is no central promotion fund for Town and Country Church. It can only be promoted by the interested boards and agencies and by the ministers themselves. Will you, therefore, take responsibility for:

1. Asking for circulars and sample copies;
2. Announcing the Journal at ministerial association meetings;
3. Seeing that Town and Country Church is announced at all rural church conferences;
4. Sending us material for publication.